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ABSTRACT

Suggesting that schools can provide valuable reading and writing practice for their students through the implementation of a school post office program, this booklet describes the United States Postal Service's "Wee Deliver" program and provides some materials to get the program started. Participants may model their school after a town by naming streets and assigning addresses. Jobs can then be posted and filled through an application and interview process, with students selected based on achievement and attendance, thereby strengthening student motivation to do well. Students will learn real life skills by performing tasks, being on time for work and developing teamwork. Contains 41 references, a sample news release, application, and employment examination, and sample letter formats and certifications. (EF)

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Introduction

An introductional guide to the Postal Service's Wee Deliver In-School Literacy Program

ED 448 442

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The In-School Postal Service

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CS 217 256

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Welcome to *Wee Deliver*!

Dear teachers, principals and school adminstrators:

You and your students are about to embark upon an exciting and challenging adventure. In 1990 the Postal Service introduced the *Wee Deliver In-School Literacy Program* to help improve reading and writing skills of elementary school children. It has grown to include more than 20,000 schools across the country.

Wee Deliver encourages teachers to incorporate letter writing into their classroom activities. The program, flexible enough to fit any curriculum and student population, is limited only by your imagination and creativity.

So how does it work? It's simple, all you need to do is model your school after a minature town that has its very own post office! This manual includes samples from other schools to help you get started. But, you and your students can create your own ideas that reflect the uniqueness of your community.

The first step is to assign town names to hallways, and street names to classrooms. Then, each student receives his or her own address with ZIP Code. To further academic learning, some schools name streets after continents, oceans, explorers, scientists, famous African-Americans, Hispanic heros and Native American culture. This is your chance to be creative and plan a town that reflects the interest and pride of its inhabitants, the students!

Start by posting the jobs to be filled. The students apply and interview for the different jobs that are available (postmaster, mailhandlers, facers/cancellers, sorters and of course, letter carriers). The students run the post office themselves. They learn real-life skills by performing tasks, being on time for work and developing teamwork.

Wee Deliver postal employees will experience the world of work by applying for specific postal jobs. These postal workers should be selected based on their test scores, interviews, attendance and overall grades as criteria. As a result, students motivate themselves to improve their classroom develop at his or her own pace and ability.

We encourage you to contact your local post office if you haven't done so already. Your postmaster or station manager will be happy to assist you in setting up your post office and answering any questions you may have about the Postal Service. And, be sure to ask your postmaster to schedule a tour of the post office for your *Wee Deliver* postal people (and other students too!)

The Postal Service is an important member of your community and a good neighbor. We thank you for your interest in our *Wee Deliver Program*. Together we can help stamp out illiteracy!

The United States Postal Service
Corporate Outreach
Washington, D.C.

Objectives of *Wee Deliver*

- To provide children with real-life experiences in which to apply basic skills, such as:
  - writing a letter,
  - using the mail system,
  - addressing an envelope,
  - using ZIP Codes,
  - locating street addresses, and, using punctuation appropriate for text and addressing.
- To unify the student body through a student centered school-wide communication system.
- To provide a vehicle for students to use their writing skills.
- To provide experiences in proper completion of forms.
- To teach job interviewing skills and develop an awareness of career opportunities.
- To help develop a sense of responsibility.
- To improve language arts skills.
- To foster teamwork.
- To form community partnerships and encourage support of school programs.

Checklist for Elementary Schools

- ❑ Decide if the entire school or one classroom will participate in letter writing.
- ❑ Determine if positions will be filled on a rotating basis (once a month, every grading period, every three months, etc.) and what criteria will be used in filling positions (combination of test score, grades, attendance, etc.).
- ❑ Identify how you will post jobs and collect applications.
- ❑ Identify who will give employment exam and where it will be given.
- ❑ Identify where post office will be located.
- ❑ Inform students and parents of the upcoming program.
- ❑ Notify parent group of the program and request donations of envelopes, mailbags, t-shirt "uniforms," caps, etc.
- ❑ Select street names/city names for hallways and classrooms.
- ❑ Select addresses for each student.
- ❑ Select a class (or find volunteers) to build mailboxes for each classroom.
- ❑ Select a class (or find volunteers) to provide collection boxes for hallways.
- ❑ Select a class (or find volunteers) to make street signs, design and make your post office logo for mailboxes, make carrier route maps, and create a roster (or directory) of all students and their individual addresses.
- ❑ Schedule the employment exam.
- ❑ Grade the exam, look at other criteria, develop list of potential workers.
- ❑ Schedule interviews.
- ❑ Select post office employees and inform them of duties, hours of operation,procedures.
- ❑ Ask local postmaster to "swear in" your postal employees at an official ceremony.
- ❑ Inform students, parents and teachers of the names of employees, postoffice hours of operation, procedures for using post office and time and date of employee swearing-in ceremony.
- ❑ Inform local media of the ceremony.
- ❑ Consider expanding your program by setting up a Pen Pal Club with another school.
- ❑ Have fun!

Wee Deliver organizational structure suggestions:

Step 1

- Testing and hiring of student postal employees
- Establish a student stamp review board for stamp designs
- Establish student school mapping and address assignment groups
- Schedule swearing-in ceremony

Step 2

- Applications accepted and interviews conducted for postal positions
- Students design stamps
- Directory and school map completed
- Addresses assigned
- Conduct *Wee Deliver* Postmaster installation ceremony
- Students begin writing and mailing letters

Step 3

- *Wee Deliver* can be expanded to include school-wide contests and activities

Step 4

- Kindergarten, developmental kindergarten, and physically impaired students begin to use system on regular basis

Wee Deliver
Collection Box of Ideas

A. Promote letter writing amongst students

1. Want a letter - write a letter
2. Cheer up a friend - write a letter
3. Special events - write a letter
4. Great pen pals - write a letter
5. Provide student directory of addresses

B. Involve participation

1. Create posters
2. Design individual student stamps
3. Letter writing contests

C. Encouragement

1. Certificates for participation to students
2. Recognition for good work
3. Promote team work

Glossaries

Kindergarten

Address	The location where mail is to be delivered.
Bundle	Several pieces of mail tied or bundled together.
Letter Carrier	A mail delivery person.
Mailbag/ pouch/satchel	A sack in which envelopes and letters are carried.
Mailbox	The mail receptacle in which the letter carrier leaves a customers' mail.
Mailhandler	A person who loads or unloads mail.
Postage Stamp	A piece of paper issued by the Postal Service which is glued to the upper right-hand corner of an envelope. A stamp is the cost for processing and delivering a letter.
Work room	The area of the post office where mail is handled.

Other grades (1st through 8th)

Dead letter	A letter that is undeliverable because it has a bad address and no return address.
Dispatch	The time mail must be ready to leave the office.
Faced mail	Mail arranged with the addresses and stamps all facing the same way.
Facer	The person who faces the mail all the same way.

First-Class Mail	Letters, postal cards and all matter partially or completely in writing. All First-Class mail except postal cards must be sealed.
Hold outs	Mail held for special handling or dispatch.
Leave	An authorized absence from your job. You must let the postmaster know.
Nixie Mail	Mail which is addressed incorrectly or not deliverable as addressed.
Philately	The collection and study of postage stamps for fun and profit.
Postage Due	Mail on which not enough postage was paid. The amount is due when the letter is delivered.
Postmaster	The supervisor of all mailroom workers. The postmaster is responsible for everything that happens in a post office.
Shift	An employee's assigned work schedule.
Sorter	The person who sorts the mail by town and puts it in the sorting bin.
Sorting Machines	Machines which sort the mail by size, type and delivery location.
Tap	To collect mail from the deposit box (also called a letter collection box).
Working Mail	Mail that must be sorted or distributed.
	This work stands for: Zoning Improvement Plan. A ZIP Code is a five- or nine-digit number used to identify a delivery station.

Sample Invitation

This invitation was created by the Davis Elementary School (in Marietta, GA) Dedication Day ceremony of their Wee Deliver Post Office.

Invitations can be simple flyers or they can be more formal card-like invitations.

Post cards, letters, notes, and more
These are what we're waiting for!
The Davis Post Office is ready to go!
But, the dedication is first! And so-o-o

We'd like you to join us on Dedication Day.
That's on February 13th — a Thursday.
We'll be starting promptly at half past one
In the Phys. Ed. Room. It'll be fun!!

All of us at Davis are really, really hopin'
You'll come help us dedicate and officially "open"!

DATE: Thursday, February 13, 1992
TIME: 1:30 P.M.
PLACE: Davis Elementary Physical Education Room
R.S.V.P. by Wednesday, February 12, please

Wee Deliver Postmaster Installation Ceremony

In the 'real' post office, postmasters are sworn into office during an official installation (swearing-in) ceremony.

Many important people from the town are invited to this very special event — the mayor, the police and fire chiefs, and sometimes even congressional representatives will attend.

Some schools have a swearing-in ceremony for their *Wee Deliver* postmaster as well.

Your local postmaster will be happy to administer the oath of office to your new *Wee Deliver* postmaster (copy of the oath included).

If you like, you may invite parents, members of the community and students from other schools to your installation ceremony.

And, this is a great opportunity to get your school into the local news and maybe even on TV! We've enclosed a sample news release you can use to contact the media.

Have fun!

Sample News Release

Please retype on your letterhead, revising as necessary to suit the needs of your community.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For additional information call:
(Your name and phone number)

____-year-old to be 'sworn in' as Postmaster of (school) Post Office

_____, a ___-year old student at _____ Elementary School will be 'sworn in' as postmaster of the _____ Post Office. The post office, not open to the general public, is part of the U.S. Postal Service's literacy program, "Wee Deliver," which promotes reading, writing and life skills. *(Wee Deliver Postmaster name)* will be sworn into office by _____ , Postmaster of _____ *(city)* at a special ceremony at the school on _____ *(date)*.

"The school sets up its own "post office" where different classrooms are assigned their own ZIP Codes, corridors are named as streets, and students are able to send correspondence to other students in the same school," explains (city) Postmaster _____ (name).

Younger children often become involved in designing stamps, there are the "letter carriers" who deliver the mail and there are those who sort the mail so that it can reach its proper destination. And students are expected to use proper addressing techniques. Otherwise the letter may be stamped "return to sender" by the "nixie" clerk.

"This really helps the children learn good writing and reading skills," says _____, *(teacher or principal's name)*, "and also teaches them the importance of good work habits."*

_____ School began working on the project ____ months ago. Other students who have been assigned positions include: *(list names and positions of students)*.

Oath of Office for postmaster swearing in ceremony

♦♦♦

I do solemnly swear
that I take this
obligation freely,
and
that I will faithfully
discharge the
duties
of the office on
which
I am about to enter.

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Wee Deliver
Job Descriptions

The following is a list of the *Wee Deliver* postal postions. All employees must be responsible students, with good attendance records.

A. Postmaster

1. Responsible for everyone who works in the post office.
2. Picks up mail from central mail drop.
3. Helps train new employees.
4. Divides the mail into delivery routes for the letter carriers.
5. Fills in for absent employees.

B. Facers

1. Places all the envelopes the same way.

C. Cancellers

1. Cancels all stamps.

D. Nixie Clerks

1. Checks addresses for proper form and punctuation.
2. Stamps letters "Return to Sender" if not correct.

E. Sorters

1. Sorts all mail by towns.
2. Places town mail in street sorting boxes.
3. Puts addresses in numerical order.
4. Rubber bands all letters to a specific street and places them in town mail bag.

F. Letter Carriers

1. Each carrier delivers the mail to their designated streets.

Wee Deliver
Job Application

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Birthdate (Month, Day, Year) _____ Grade _____ Teacher _____

Applying for (Job Position): _____

A. Postmaster
B. Facer
C. Nixie Clerk
D. Carrier
E. Sorter

Reference: _____
Teacher's Signature

OFFICE USE ONLY

Exam Score _____

Interview Date _____

Hired: Yes _____ No _____

Position Assigned _____

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Sample employment examination

The following examination is suitable for elementary school students. You can use this sample as is, or develop your own questions based on the local community.

1. **Circle the correctly written proper name:**
   a. Sally smith
   b. Sally Smith
   c. sally smith
   d. sally Smith

2. **Circle the correctly written street address:**
   a. literacy 10 lane
   b. Literacy Lane 10
   c. 10 Literacy Lane
   d. 10 Literacy

3. **Circle the correct way to complete this address:**
   Ralph Reader
   206 Storybook Drive

   a. Library 30359
   b. Library, GA
   c. Georgia 30359
   d. Library, GA 30359

4. **Circle the correct way to complete this address:**
   Mary Magellan
   4756 Explorer Way

   a. Discovery, OH 44230
   b. Discovery, OH, 44230
   c. Discovery 44230
   d. 44230 Discovery, OH

5. **Circle the list that places the numbers in order from largest to smallest:**
   a. 850, 832, 765
   b. 662, 465, 473
   c. 750, 801, 865
   d. 784, 487, 874

6. **Circle the list that places the numbers in order from smallest to largest:**
   a. 487, 478, 479
   b. 219, 231, 270
   c. 189, 188, 187
   d. 301, 204, 402

7. **Circle the word that is spelled correctly:**

a. stret
b. streat
c. strete
d. street

8. **Circle the word that is spelled correctly:**

a. writting
b. writeing
c. writing
d. riting

9. **Circle the word that is spelled correctly:**

a. letter
b. leter
c. leterr
d. lettar

10. **Circle the address that has the information correctly arranged:**

a. Kim Johnson
34567 Orbit, FL
2001 Planet Drive

b. Kim Johnson
2001 Planet Drive
Orbit, FL 34567

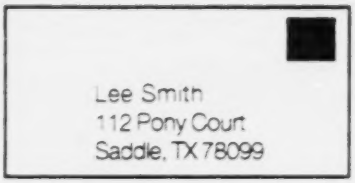
c. Orbit, FL 34567
2001 Planet Drive
Kim Johnson

d. Kim Johnson
2001 Planet FL
Orbit Drive 34567

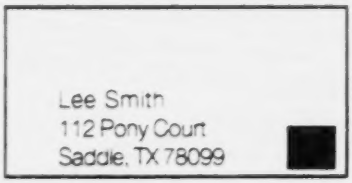
Bonus Question

Circle the envelope on which the stamp is in the proper location:

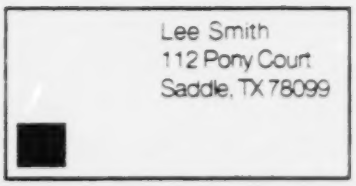
a.



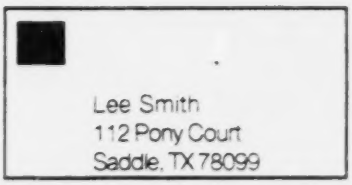
c.



b.



d.



Postal Examination Answer Key

1. b
2. c
3. d
4. a
5. a
6. b
7. d
8. c
9. a
10. b

Bonus: a

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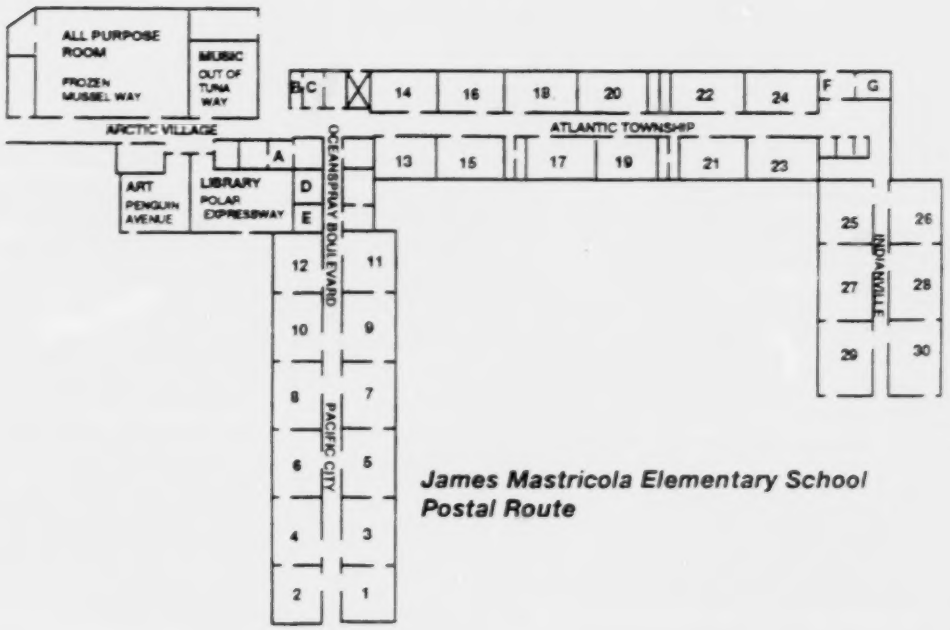
School Town Map

1. The school becomes a Town or Towns.
2. Classrooms become streets in the Town.
3. Student desks are houses.
4. Set-up flexible based on schools needs, or size, or physical layout of building.



James Mastricola Elementary School
Postal Route

1 SHRIMP CIRLCE
2 HERMIT CRAB CIRCLE
3 LOBSTER LANE
4 EEL ALLEY
5 MERMAID LANE
6 OCTOPUS CIRCLE
7 SHARK STREET
8 OYSTER LANE
9 SEAGULL WAY
10 SEAHORSE STREET
11 WHALE STREET
12 DOLPHIN DRIVE
13 SURF DRIVE
14 TARFISH LANE
15 LIGHTHOUSE LANE
16 SNAIL'S PLACE
17 STINGRAY BAY ROAD
18 EASIDE DRIVE
19 AQUARIUM AVENUE
20 ARNACLE BEACH AVENUE
21 SHARK BOULEVARD
22 LOWFISH BOULEVARD
23 IS UNDERSEA LANE
24 OCEAN AVENUE
26 SQUIRT STREET
27 PIRANHA PLACE
28 TENTACLE TERRACE
29 PORCUPINE PUFFER PLACE
30 CRAB CRESCENT

A OCEANSIDE WAY
B SEAVIEW DRIVE
C SQUID DRIVE
D SEBASTIAN'S COVE
E SANDY BEACH WAY
F UNA TERRACE
G EASTAR LANE

Sample Letter of Congratulations

Dear

Congratulations! You have been selected for the position of _____ in the _____ school post office.

Installation ceremonies will take place on (DATE) at (TIME) in (LOCATION).

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Susie Jones, Chairperson
Wee Deliver Program

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Sample Announcement Letter To Parents

(Please print on your school stationery)

Date

Dear Parents,

(Name of school) Post Office will soon open!

Your child has the opportunity to write letters to any student or staff member at school. You too can write to your children at school. There's a mailbox in the lobby where the third grade postal employees will collect the mail for processing and delivery.

The third grade is responsible for the mechanics of the *Wee Deliver* In-School post office program and have the strong support of the PTA behind them.

The goals of the *Wee Deliver* program are:

1. To provide the children with real life experiences in which to apply basic skills such as: writing a letter, addressing envelopes, using the mail system, and using ZIP Codes.

2. To unify the student body through a student centered schoolwide communication system.

3. To provide knowledge of how mail is processed.

4. To develop a sense of job responsibility as a post office employee.

We hope you and your child make use of this innovative program.

Sincerely,

Letter writing practice ... *

Like all writing, letter writing should be approached through the writing process. First, students must gather information by brainstorming, clustering, filling out graphic organizers, completing research, reading listening, sharing ideas orally, etc ... Next, students compose letters. At this time "ideas" are most important; format and punctuation can wait. In the next stage, students revise ideas to make sure that what they have written will be clear to the readers.

Next, it's time to edit the work. This is the time to check for proper letter format and MUGS (mechanics, usage, grammar, and spelling). It is helpful to use peer pairs or groups during revision and editing because "two heads" (even four) are often better than one when it comes to bringing a piece of writing to the "publishable" stage. Publishable quality means the letter is ready for readers' eyes. It communicates effectively, reads smoothly, and is technically correct. Just one last note: You may find it necessary to reteach general writing skills and specific letter writing skills as you observe students' work. That's fine. Reteaching can be accomplished on an individual, small group, or whole-class basis.

A few sample lessons to give you ideas of integrating writing and content areas into the *Wee Deliver* In-School Post Office Program follow. Many other applications can be added.

Kinds of Letters

Through *Wee Deliver*, students can be introduced to various kinds of business and friendly letters.

A. Business Letters
1. Request
2. Application
3. Complaint
4. Information
5. Sales
6. Order

B. Friendly Letters
1. Thank you
2. Invitation
3. Acceptance and regret
4. Announcement
5. News
6. Pen Pal

* The following pages on letter writing were developed by curriculum consultants for the Ferguson-Florissant School District, St. Louis County, MO.

Sample Friendly Letter

_____ Writer Street Address
_____ City, State, ZIP
_____ Month, Date, Year

Salutation _____,

Body _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Complimentary Closing _____
Signature _____

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Sample Business Letter

_____ Writer Street Address
_____ City, State, ZIP
_____ Month, Date, Year

Recipient Name _____
Recipient Job Title _____
Street Address _____
City, State ZIP _____

Salutation _____ :

Body _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Complimentary Closing _____

Signature _____
Printed Name _____

Modes of writing

A letter-writing unit is a perfect place to strenthen learning in the four modes of writing as the following examples show. Students particularly need practice in supporting their opinions in persuasive writing.

Example 1: Write a letter to Grandma about a newly purchased van.

Example 2: Write a letter as part of a social studies unit on the Pilgrims.

Descriptive	Expository	Narrative	Persuasive
Write Grandma a letter describing the special features found in the van.	Write Grandma explaning why you got the van.	Write Grandma a letter telling her a real or imaginary story about a trip in the van.	Write Grandma to convince her to buy the same kind of van that your family bought.
A Pilgrim writes a letter to a relative in England describing the first Thanksgiving feast.	A contemporary native American writes his child a letter explaining his ancestors' involvement in the first Thanksgiving.	The student writes a letter to a classmate explaining why the pilgrim feast was important.	Convince relatives to continue the feast tradition as an important reminder of past events.

Recipe for Success

Glue Recipe for *Wee Deliver* Stamps

1 pkg. KNOX gelatin.
2 Tbls. any fruit juice.
Cook until gelation is dissolved in small sauce pan.
Brush on the back of 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of stamps designed by students.
Let dry for 24 hours.
Cut apart and put in letter writing center.

♦♦♦

We want to hear from you. Write to us with your ideas and suggestions at:

"Wee Deliver" Literacy Program
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Rm. 10653
Washington, DC 20260-3100

To obtain a free starter kit you may call (202) 268-6689. In order to process your request, we need the name and address of the school where the program is to be implemented, along with the contact person and telephone number. Only one kit can be sent per school. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

Bibliography

Picture Books

Ahlberg, Janet and Allay Ahlberg. *The Jolly Postman.* 1986. Little Brown, $12.95 (0-316-02036-2). K-Gr. 4. In this most original book, alternate pages form envelopes containing amusing letters that the jolly postman delivers to the fairy tale characters (the Three Bears, Cinderella, the Big Bad Wolf, and others) on his rounds. The sequel is *The Jolly Christmas Postman* (Little, Brown).

Brisson, Pat. *Your Best Friend, Kate.* Illus. by Rick Brown. 1989. Bradbury, $12.95 (0-02-714350-3). K-Gr. 4. Kate, her younger brother, and their parents take a car trip through the southeastern United States. Kate's short letters to her best friend, Lucy, describe the sights and the back-seat squabbles along the way. The bright, cartoon-like illustrations show state flowers and birds as well as scenes from the family's vacation. The sequel, *Kate Heads West*, traces their next trip through four western states.

Brown, Marc. *Arthur Goes to Camp.* 1982. Little Brown, $14.95 (0-316-11218-6); paper, $4.95 (0-316-11058-2). K-Gr. 3. When this popular character is shipped off to Camp Meadowbrook, he's a most unhappy camper. While the text details his misadventures, letters to Mom and Dad appear in the illustrations and give Arthur's won views of camp life, from despair to desperation to delight.

Caselely, Judith. *Dear Annie.* 1991. Greenwillow, $13.95 (0-688-10011-2). Preschool-Gr. 2. From the time she was a baby, Annie has received cards and letters from her loving Grandpa. This brightly illustrated picture book shows the correspondence through the years, and ends after Annie's letters (the high point of show-and-tell) have inspired her teacher to set up a "Mail from Everybody" bulletin board.

Campbell, Rod. *Dear Zoo.* 1982 Macmillan, $9.95 (0-02-716440-3); Puffin, paper, $4.95 (0-317-62180-7). Preschool-Gr. 1. A letter to the zoo, asking for a pet, brings a series of silly answers as various wild animals arrive special delivery. Bold, full-color illustrations feature cartons, crates, and baskets with flaps that open to show the animals, turning this popular book into a read-aloud guessing game.

Dupasquier, Philippe. *Dear Daddy.* 1985. Bradbury, $12.95 (0-02-733170-9); Puffin, paper, $3.95 (0-14-050822-8). K-Gr. 3. A little girl writes to her father, who's away at sea, telling what's happening at home. The pages are divided into two strips of bright cartoon-like illustrations; the bottom band, occupying two-thirds of each page, shows events at home, while the top one shows events aboard ship.

James, Simon. *Dear Mr. Blueberry.* 1991. Macmillan. Margaret K. McElderry, $12.95 (0-689-50529-9). Preschool-Gr. 2. Discovering a whale in her backyard pond one summer, Emily writes to her trusted teacher, Mr. Blueberry, for advice.

Keats, Ezra Jack. *A letter to Amy.* 1968. HarperCollins, $13.95 (0-06-023108-4); paper, $4.95 (0-06-443063-4). Preschool-Gr. 2. Uneasy about inviting a girl to his birthday party, Peter perseveres and finds that his happiest moment is when Amy walks through his door. By the author of the Caldecott Medal winner *The Snowy Day*, which shows Peter as a younger child.

Moore, Inga. *Little Dog Lost.* 1991. Macmillan, $14.95 (0-02-767648-X) Preschool-Gr. 3. Even as her family drives to a new home in the country, Liz is writing to her best friend, Jill. Sensitive pictures in autumn colors illustrate the story of Liz and her brother, Tom, who are too shy to venture out to meet new friends until their dog runs away and they turn to their farm and village neighbors for help. Liz's letters sustain her through all her experiences.

Parker, Nancy Winsow. *Love from Aunt Betty.* 1983. Putnam, $13. 95 (0-396-08135-5). Preschool-Gr. 1. In this comical picture book written in the form of a letter, Aunt Betty sends her beloved nephew Charlie a strange Transylvanian recipe for chocolate fudge cake. The wild events that occur when he follows the directions are revealed only in the colorful artwork.

Sampton, Sheila. *Jenny's Journey.* 1991. Viking, $13.95 (0-670-83490-4). Ages 3-7. Writing a letter to her friend Maria, Jenny fantasizes about sailing across the sea to Maria's new island home. Bright coors and naive forms create a series of charming illustrations showing Jenny's voyage.

Va, Leong. *A Letter to the King.* 1991. HarperCollins, $14.95 (0-06-020079-0). K-Gr. 2. In ancient China, young Ti Ying learns that her father has been unjustly imprisoned. Braving the guards at the Forbidden City, she delivers a letter to the king that persuades him to release her father. The text appears both in English and in Chinese. A good read-aloud tale.

Williams, Vera B. *Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea.* Illus. by **Vera B. Williams and Jennifer Williams**, 1988. Greenwillow, $11.95 (0-688-07161-9). Gr. 1-5. A series of postcards home relay the experiences of Stringbean, his older brother, Fred, and his dog, Potato, on their camping trip across the western United States. The striking illustrations include colorful, original postcard art, stamps and sepia drawings of snapshots.

Zimelman, Nathan. *Please Excuse Jasper.* Illus. by **Ray Cruz**. 1987. Abingdon, $10.95 (0-687-31643-X). Gr. 1-5. "Dear Miss Titterinton, Please excuse Jasper for being absent yesterday ... " begins each letter in this book. And each one goes on to detail a fantastic event that prevented the catastrophe-prone Jasper from making it to school. A comical choice for the classroom.

Books for Beginning Readers

Hoban, Liallian. *Arthur's Pen Pal.* 1976. HarperCollins, $10.95 (0-06-022372-3); paper, $3.50 (0-06-444032-X). Gr. 1-3. When Arthur the monkey gets a letter from his pen pal, he finds a new perspective on his problems with his little sister.

Lobel, Arnold. *"The Letter." From Frog and Toad Are Friends.* 1970. HarperCollins, $10.70 (0-06-023957-3); paper, $3.50 (0-06-444020-6) Gr. 1-3. Delivery by snail is certainly slow, but when Frog sends a letter to his friend Toad, the mail's worth waiting for.

Sharmat, Marjorie. *Mitchell Is Moving*. Illus. by **Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey**. 1978. Macmillan, $11.95 (0-02-782410-1); paper, $3.95 (0-02-045260-8). Gr. 1-3. Margo the dinosaur is sad and lonely when her friend Mitchell moves "two weeks away." When Mitchell writes to say he misses her, she surprises him by moving next door to his new home.

Books for Older Readers

Bellairs, John. *The Letter, the Witch, and the Ring*. Illus. by **Richard Egielski**. 1976. Dial, $13.95 (0-8037-4740-3); Dell, paper, $3.25 (0-440-44722-4). Gr. 4-7. A strange letter to the local witch sends her and a young friend named Rose Rita on a mysterious adventure. The third in a trilogy beginning with *The House with a Clock in Its Walls*, this novel stands on its own.

Cleary, Beverly. *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. Illus. by **Paul Zelinsky**. 1983. Morrow, $12.95 (0-688-02405-X); Dell, paper, $3.25 (0-440-41794-5). Gr. 4-7. A letter to an author (Mr. Henshaw) written in second grade begins a correspondence that continues sporadically through sixth grade, when the letters and a diary give Leigh an outlet for writing about his thoughts since his parents' divorce. A popular Newberry Medal winner.

Dragonwagon, Crescent. *Dear Miss Moshki*. Illus. by **Diane Palmiciano**. 1986. Macmillan, $12.95 (0-02-773190-1). Gr. 3-5. Sent out of the classroom for a disruptive tickling episode, Jeremy and Chris are afraid they'll miss the highlight of the day — a visiting author. After they've written letters of explanation and apology to their teacher, their imaginations take over and they write wilder and wilder versions of how the trouble started, with amusing results.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *The War Began at Supper: Letters to Miss Loria*. Illus. by **Betsy Lewin**. 1991. Delacorte, $11.00 (0-0385-30530-3). Gr. 3-5. When war begins in the Persian Gulf, the kids in Mrs. Clark's class pour out their thoughts and fears in letters to Miss Loria, their former student.

Henry, Marguerite. *Dear Readers and Riders*. Illus. by **Wesley Dennes**. 1969. Rand McNally, o.p. Gr. 4-6. The many fans of Henry's ever-popular horse stories will find this book of readers' letters and the author's responses a fascinating glimpse

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Sarah, Plain and Tall*. 1985. HarperCollins, $10.95 (0-06-024101-2); paper, $2.50 (0-06-440205-3). Gr. 3-5. This Newberry Medal-winning historical novel includes several touching letters between two motherless children on the prairie and the lady who has answered their father's ad for a mail-order bride.

Monjo, F. N.. *Letters to Horseface: Young Mozart's Travels in Italy*. Illus. by **Don Bolognese and Elaine Raphael**. 1975. Viking, o.p.; Puffin, paper, $7.95 (0-14-034801-8), Gr, 4-6, As lively and irreverent as its title, this short novel consists of a series of fictional letters from 14-year-old Mozart to his sister as he tours Italy with his father. Illustrated with attractive drawings. In the manner of a sketchbook.

Uchida, Yoskiko. *"Letter from a Concentration Camp."* From The Big Book for Peace. Illus. by **Allen Say**. 1990. Dutton, $15.95 (0-525-44605-2). Gr. 3-7. In this fictional letter, a boy born in California but of Japanese ancestry writes to a friend about his family's senseless imprisonment in a U.S. internment camp during World War II. Sensitively written and illustrated.

James, Simon. *"Dear Mr. Blueberry."* Illus. in full color by the author. This story is a nice blend of fantasy and reality with a smattering of facts. The large print and simple vocabulary make it appropriate for beginning readers.

Skurzynski, Gloria. *"Here Comes The Mail."* Illus. with full color photographs by the author. $13.95 RSBE (0-02-7892916-2) Ages 5-8. In this young photo-essay, we follow all the steps Kathy's letter takes on its way to her cousin Stephanie.

Kightley, Roalinda. *"The Postman."* Illus. in full color by the author. $3.95. (0-689-71223-5) Ages 4-8. What does a postman do on his rounds? Simple, rhythmic text and bright, bold pictures will satisfy the curiosity of young readers about this familiar person and his job.

Brisson, Pat. *"Your Best Friend, Kate."* Illus. in full color by **Rick Brown**. $13.95 RSBE (0-02-714350-3) Ages 5-8. Memorable times and family anecdotes are described with zip and verve by Kate in letters to her friend Lucy.

Books about Letter Writing

Leedy, Loreen. Messages in the Mailbox: How to Write a Letter. 1991. Holiday, $14.95 (0-8234-0889-2). K-Gr. 4. In this inviting how-to book with accessible, cartoonlike illustrations, an alligator teacher takes her class through the fine art of friendly letters, business letters, complaint letters, and more. At the end, students echo a universal sentiment: "The best part about writing letters is getting letters back."

Mischel, Florence. How to Write a Letter. Illus. by Anne Green. Revised edition. 1988. Watts, $10.40 (0-531-10587-3). Gr. 4-8. For older students, this straightforward book provides information and advice on matters as fundamental as paper and postage and as delicate as writing notes of sympathy or apology. Included are examples of writing a friendly letter to a new pen pal, an angry letter to a member of Congress, and a thank-you letter for a useless present (the example of what not to write in this case will be particularly useful).

Tales of Special Delivery

Asch, Grank and Vladimir Vagin. Dear Brother. 1992. Scholastic, $13.95 (0-590-43107-2) Preschool-Gr. 4. When Joey and Marvin retrieve a discarded packet of letters sent between their country-mouse great-great-uncle and their city-mouse great-great-uncle years before, they discover their family's past and draw closer to each other.

Hail to the Mail

Brandt, Betty. Special Delivery. Illus. by Kathy Haubrich. 1988. Carolrhoda, $9.95 (0-87614-312-5). Gr. 1-4. Written for beginning readers, this brief history of America's postal system allows kids to contrast the carrier pigeon, stagecoach, and Pony Express with more modern developments in postal delivery.

Dicerto, Joseph J.. The Pony Express: Hoofbeats in the Wilderness. 1989. Watts, $11.90 (0-531-10751-5). Gr. 3-6. Illus. with photos, maps, and period prints, this book tells the history of the Pony Express: its founding, its dangers, its heroes, and its demise.

Gibbons, Gail. *The Post Office Book: Mail and How It Moves*. 1982. HarperCollins, $13.95 (0-690-04198-5); HarperCollins/Trophy, paper, $4.95 (0-06-446029-0) Preschool-Gr. 4. Simple illustrations in red, white, blue, and black brighten this picture book that explains how letters are collected, stamped, sorted, transported, and delivered.

Roths, Harold. *First Class! The Postal System in Action*. 1983. Pantheon, $10.95 (-394-85384-9). Gr. 3-4. This photo-essay follows the paths of letters and packages through the processing, sorting, and delivery system from their posting to their destinations.

Pfeffer, Susan. *Dear Dad, Love Laurie*. 1989. Scholastic, $10.95 (0-590-41681-2); paper, $2.75 (0-590-41682-0). Gr. 5-7. Laurie chronicles her sixth grade year in weekly letters to her divorced father.

Letter Writing

P.S. write soon!, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Postal Service 1982.

How to write first-class letters: the handbook for practical letter writing. Lincolnwood, Ill.: NTC Pub. Group, 1994.

What to do when your mom or dad says ... "Write to grandma!" Childrens 1984.

"Dear Meg" tells you how to write the most important letters of your life. New York, NY: Warner 1986.

This is to Certify That

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has become an official
WEE DELIVER FACER

This is to Certify That

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has become an official
WEE DELIVER FACER/CANCELER

This is to Certify That

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WEE DELIVER CANCELER

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WEE DELIVER SORTER

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WEE DELIVER NIXIE CLERK

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WEE DELIVER CARRIER